GIBSON MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Approved by:

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Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Gibson Marine Park is to provide remote wilderness recreational activities such as camping, swimming, hiking, kayaking, fishing, nature and culture appreciation, and soaking in the warm springs. Located on the south side of Flores Island off the west coast of Vancouver Island, the park is along the travel corridor to Hot Springs Cove, a popular tourist destination. The features of Gibson Marine Park include a warm spring pool and beaches of Whitesand Cove, where wilderness camping is possible. A safe anchorage in Matilda Inlet is nearby and a connecting trail from the inlet provides access to the park. The longer Ahousat Wild Side Heritage Trail, that starts at the village of Marktosis, passes through Gibson Marine Park, and ends up at Cow Bay in Flores Island Park, provides an opportunity to hike through old growth Sitka spruce forest and on pristine coastal beaches as well as to gain an understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage of Clayoquot Sound.

Gibson Marine Park's location and features combine to meet the protected areas system recreation goals of providing key destinations, enhancing tourism travel routes, and ensuring access to local recreation opportunities.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to protect cultural features. Clayoquot Sound has a vibrant First Nations heritage, both past and present. Beaches were popular gathering and village sites and are found in many of the protected areas in Clayoquot Sound. The park is rich in First Nations sites and post-contact sites that capture glimpses of the past. Post-contact history includes a historic battle between Europeans and First Nations, a Union Steamship Lines stop, and farming and settlement patterns of the Gibson family.

Tertiary Role

The **tertiary** role is to protect and present special values such as geothermal and geological features. The park protects a warm spring and its associated hot temperature ecosystem. The upland warm springs provides a focus for recreation and tourism to both visitors to and residents of Clayoquot Sound.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of natural values	➢ Encourage researchers to conduct a rare elements inventory.
Lack of public awareness of cultural and natural values	➢ In conjunction with First Nations, develop interpretative information on park values and appropriate behaviour. ➢ Enhance conservation and cultural heritage information on website.
Access to and management of the Wild	➢ Work with Ahousaht First Nation and private owners

Side Trail	to complete trail access and in managing the trail.
Impact on park values as a result of increased level of use by kayak campers – site degradation, habituation of wildlife, impacts on cultural sites and unusual plant community in dune area	➢ Implement BRIM and upgrade trail and signage. ➢ If use increases in the park, provide information on proper human waste disposal procedures. Provide sanitary facilities only as warranted by the volume of use. ➢ Develop recreation plan (for all Clayoquot Sound protected areas) to develop strategy for visitor facilities and public information on appropriate behaviours. Work with First Nations where appropriate. ➢ Consider restrictions in visitor numbers to maintain a high quality experience.
Development of surrounding forest lands and impacts on park values and scenic values	➢ Work with Ministry of Forests and industry to ensure protection of park values and visual resources.
Relationships with First Nations and pending treaty settlements	➢ Develop good working relationships with First Nations to gain an understanding and appreciation of protected area status and park values. ➢ Liaise with Central Region Board (CRB) to inform them of management issues in the park.
Participation in Biosphere Reserve	➢ Work with Biosphere Foundation, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust and CRB to ensure the Environmental Stewardship Division's perspective is taken into account in Biosphere activities and projects.

Zoning

Natural Environment Zone – covers the entire park to reflect the conservation and recreation values. The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Very minimal contribution (0.07%) to the representation of the Windward Island Mountains Ecosection (WIM), which is well protected with 17.4%
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Minimal contribution of 0.16% to the representation of CWHvh1 which is well protected provincially with 19.3%
Special Features	☒	Geothermal features, old growth Sitka spruce, marbled murrelets, dunes
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Red-listed marbled murrelet
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☐	None known at this time

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☒	Use of hot springs, destination area for sea kayakers, sheltered anchorage in Matilda Inlet
travel corridor	☒	On the kayak route from Tofino to Hot Springs Cove
local recreation	☒	Use of the Ahousat Wild Side Heritage Trail
Special Opportunities	☒	Hot springs, marine wildlife viewing, First Nation guided walks
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Natural and cultural features

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☒	Post-contact history focused on warm springs, settlement by the Gibson family and donation of 17 hectares of land surrounding the spring by the family
Special Feature	☒	First Nations sites, culturally modified trees, post-contact: Matilda Inlet was the site of a historic battle ground in 1864

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☒	Part of Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas in Clayoquot Sound, marine component protected as part of Flores Island Park, complements recreation

		opportunities in Flores Island Park. This was the first marine park on the west coast of Vancouver Island.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☒	Covered by the Interim Measurements Extension Agreement with the Central Region Board
Partnerships	☒	Possible partnerships with Biosphere Foundation and Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
Vulnerability	☒	Vulnerable to recreation use and adjacency issues from forest development, community and First Nation relations/treaty
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Interim Measures Extension Agreement; Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel Watershed Reserve Plans; Marine Protected Areas Strategy

Area: 143 hectares

Date of establishment: November 30, 1967

Zoning Map - Gibson Marine Park

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Natural Environment
Protected Area Boundary

0 100
m

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